

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

Claims 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Tsuchii et al. (EP 1,186,414 A2).

Claims 18-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by Chang (US, 6,471,317).

Claims 6 and 7 are objected to for a minor informality.

Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for indication that claims 1-4 and 8-17 are allowed.

Summary of Response to the Office Action

Applicants amend independent claims 18 and 21 to further define the invention, amend independent claim 1 to improve the form of the claim, and amend dependent claim 6 to correct a minor informality. Claim 5 was cancelled previously. Accordingly, claims 1-4 and 6-21 are presently pending for consideration.

Objection of Claims

Claims 6 and 7 are objected to because for a minor informality. Accordingly, Applicants amend dependent claim 6 to depend from independent claim 1. Thus, Applicants respectfully request that objection to claims 6 and 7 be withdrawn.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 (b) and 102(e)

Claims 18 and 19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by Tsuchii et al. (EP 1,186,414 A2), and claims 18-21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by Chang (US, 6,471,317). Applicants traverse these rejections for at least the following reasons.

Independent claim 18, as amended, recites a liquid drop discharging device including, in parts, "a common passage provided in each ejector group to supply the ejectors with ink" and "the ejectors in each ejector group are disposed such that an imaginary line connecting the ejectors is substantially parallel to the corresponding common passage to supply the ejectors with ink and inclined at a predetermined angle with respect to the sub-scanning direction, wherein the imaginary line is defined by connecting all of the ejectors in each ejector group." Similarly, independent claim 21, as amended, recites a liquid drop discharging device including in part, "a common passage provided in each ejector group," "a first imaginary line defined by connecting all of the ejectors in the first ejector group and inclined at a first angle with respect to the sub-scanning direction," and "a second imaginary line defined by connecting all of the ejectors in the second ejector group, wherein the first imaginary line and the second imaginary line are substantially parallel to the corresponding common passage."

In contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, Tsuchii et al. teaches, in FIGS. 1A, 2A, 3A, 8A, that a plurality of ink-flow paths 53 (i.e., common passages) are disposed in a straight line for supplying the ink to a dedicated ink jet recording head. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully assert that Tsuchii et al. fails to teach or suggest "a common passage provided in each ejector group to supply the ejectors with ink" and "the ejectors in each ejector group are disposed such that an imaginary line connecting the ejectors is substantially parallel to the corresponding common passage to supply the ejectors with ink and inclined at a predetermined angle with respect to the sub-scanning direction, wherein the imaginary line is defined by connecting all of the ejectors in each ejector group," as recited by independent claim 18.

In further contrast to Applicants' claimed invention, Chang teaches, in FIG. 2, that some of the ejectors in each ejector group (i.e., ejector unit) are disposed on one side of the common passage and the remaining ejectors in instant ejector group are disposed on the other side of the common passage. Furthermore, the drawing provided by the Office Action (annotated copy of FIG. 2 at page 8 of the Office Action) alleges that Chang discloses the imaginary lines. Applicants respectfully disagree. Applicants respectfully submit that the imaginary line is defined by connecting all of the ejectors in each ejector group and that the resultant imaginary line is substantially parallel to the common passage, whereas the imaginary line of Chang crosses the common passage of Chang when defined by connecting all of the ejectors in each ejector group, as annotated by the Examiner.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 18 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b) and 102 (e) be withdrawn because Tsuchii et al. and Chang, whether taken singly or combined fail to teach each and every element of amended independent claims 18 and 21. Furthermore, Applicant respectfully asserts that dependent claims 19 and 20 are allowable for at least their dependency upon amended independent claim 18, as well as the individual features each of dependent claims 19 and 20 recites.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application, withdrawal of all rejections, and the timely allowance of all pending claims. Should the Examiner feel that there are any issues outstanding after consideration of this response, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned representative to expedite prosecution.

If there are any other fees due in connection with the filing of this response, please charge the fees to our Deposit Account No. 50-0310. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.R.R. § 1.136 not accounted for above, such an extension is requested and the fee should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully Submitted,

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